

## Issue 28: INSIDER'S EDGE: Coming to America—Back to Basics!

Good afternoon, Insiders! I hope setting the clock back helped put the spring back in your step this week!



Let's get back to basics, shall we? Following *Issues 24 and 25: Coming to America*, readers asked for more details on the difference between a “qualified” alien and “non-qualified” alien.

### The Basics

Remember, to be eligible for Medicaid, a non-U.S. citizen must be a “qualified” alien in addition to meeting the other eligibility criteria (i.e., income).

Non-qualified aliens are not eligible for full Medicaid benefits. They may qualify for Medicaid coverage of emergency medical services if they meet all other eligibility criteria.

### So who is a qualified alien?\*

A qualified alien is a person residing in the United States who is not a U.S. citizen and is:

- A lawful permanent U.S. resident;
- a refugee;
- an asylee;
- an alien who has had deportation withheld under section 243(h) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA);
- an alien granted parole for at least 1 year by INS;
- an alien granted conditional entry under immigration law in effect before April 1, 1980;
- a honorably discharged veteran, an alien on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, or the spouse or unmarried dependent child of one of these persons.

The five year bar explained:

- Qualified aliens, other than refugees and asylees, may qualify for full Medicaid benefits if they entered the United States before August 22, 1996.
- Qualified aliens who entered on or after August 22, 1996, must have resided in the United States as a qualified alien for **five years** in order to qualify for full Medicaid.
- Refugees and asylees do **not** need to meet this five-year bar.
- Pregnant women and children also do **not** need to meet this five-year bar.

During the five-year bar, nonpregnant adults who are qualified aliens are limited to emergency medical services.

*\*This list covers the most common categories of qualified aliens, but it is not exhaustive.*

### Easy enough! Who is a non-qualified alien?

A non-qualified alien is an alien who is one of the following:

- an alien who does not meet the definition of qualified alien; or
- an undocumented alien.

Non-qualified aliens are limited to emergency medical services including labor and delivery unless and until their status changes to make them qualified.